

Brian Hasler

State Representative • District 77



If you're like me, you are growing tired of telemarketers calling your house at all hours to sell you things you neither want nor need. If you've had a family dinner interrupted or watched your child leave his homework to answer the phone, you know how irritating these calls can be.

With these concerns in mind, I have created this postcard with tips to cut down the burden of unwanted telemarketing calls. I've also included information about the legislation we have passed regarding "cramming" and "slamming." There are steps you can take to protect your rights and your privacy!

If you have any questions about any of this information, please don't hesitate to contact me. It is my pleasure to be of assistance to you.

Remove your name from telephone call lists

Businesses are required by federal law to maintain a do-not-call list for residential customers. When you receive a call from a business you do not want solicitation calls from, you can clearly state that you do not wish to be called by that company. Remember, you must make a "do-not-call" request for each business that calls your home.

Federal law prohibits solicitation calls to your home before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m. (local time).

To place your name on the federal "do not call" list write to:

Telephone Preference Service, DMA
P.O. Box 9014
Farmingdale, NY 11735-9014

If you feel a company is violating any of the consumer protection laws, contact the attorney general's consumer protection line at 1-800-382-5516.

Consumer Telemarketing Tips

- Ask telemarketers for the name and address of their company, and a clear explanation of the offer they are making.
- Call the Better Business Bureau, the state Attorney General's office, or the local consumer protection service in the state or city where the company is located, and ask if any complaints have been made against the firm.
- Report suspicious telemarketing calls, junk mail solicitations, or advertisements to the National Fraud Information Center at 1-800-876-7060.
- Don't pay for any prize or send any money to improve your chances of winning. It's illegal to ask you to pay to enter a contest.
- Don't give any caller your bank account number. They can use it to withdraw money from your account at any time without your knowledge and/or permission.
- Don't give your credit card number to anyone over the phone unless you made the call.
- Don't give any caller your social security number.

Call the National Consumer League's National Fraud Information Center at
1-800-876-7060

New legislation protects consumers



Stopping "slamming" & "cramming" -- We enacted legislation in both 1998 and 1999 prohibiting the unauthorized switching of telecommunications providers or the billing of unauthorized services -- known as "slamming" and "cramming." Laws now provide penalties for violators through the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) and the Attorney General's office.

Telephone solicitation -- Another law requires professional solicitors to state the name of the company and the phone number and address of the location from which the call is being made at the beginning of the call.

Professional fundraisers are required to provide information to the attorney general's office regarding the total amount of solicitations raised and the percentage of those solicitations actually received by the charitable organizations. The law also prohibits telephone solicitors from intentionally blocking Caller ID.

More needs to be done

While we have enacted several proposals to protect consumers, there is still work to be done. During this past session, we considered a series of proposals aimed at regulating telephone solicitors. Some of the key provisions of this legislation included:

- Establishing and maintaining a database of residential telephone consumers who do not wish to be called. The legislation called for an initial fee of \$10 and an annual renewal fee of \$5. Personally, I don't believe consumers should be required to pay to be put on the list.
- Requiring telephone solicitation companies to register with the Indiana Attorney General before being allowed to do business in the State of Indiana
- Mandating that telephone solicitors identify themselves and their company at the beginning of each call.

I think these proposals would be a good step forward in protecting consumers from telemarketers. I welcome any suggestions you may have.

Rep. Brian Hasler

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